

# Therapy and the connection with human personality regarding mental health:

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College is notorious for causing student's mental health problems and worsening the ones of people who already have them. The stress of college classes, social acceptance and work can be a dangerous cocktail for those dealing with mental illness or can manifest in or worsen anxiety, depression and other mental health issues. Anxiety and depression easily stem from the pressures of maintaining good academic standing and sticking with a group of peers that will make up your social circle, all while balancing the other responsibilities the mass of people expect from you as a blooming adult and scholar.

These pressures can result in academic and social struggles. Those issues can cause self-doubt and a myriad of other mental problems that can spiral and build. Colleges are very much aware to the situation and offer many resources, lots free that try to guide students towards treatment for whatever they are dealing with.

## **Mental health in college**

According to the American Psychology Association, more than 60% of college students meet the criteria for one mental health problem. The rise of mental health concerns among students has caused others to wonder if there are reliable treatments like medications and therapy for them at school. Typically there are.

Most colleges offer counseling centers where students can pay a fee or, in some cases, get free therapy session to minimize mental health effects. The effectiveness of therapy is constantly debated, especially because, depending on personality types, different therapy sessions might prove more successful than others.

Introverts and extroverts are regarded as the two primarily human personality types, with ambiverts — a mixture of both types — falling in the middle. Introverts are defined as people who get tired quickly in loud places or crowded with people, often needing to recharge in quiet locations. They don't require as much stimulation often finding enjoyment in hobbies such as writing or reading. They are typically more reserved and like to work independently. Extroverts require more stimulation and gain energy by being with people. They are more open about spending time with people and trying engaging activities.

## **The connection between personality types and therapy**

Assessing a patient's personality type can be good when finding out the best therapy that will work for someone with mental health, according to the National Institutes of Health. One of the most common types of therapy that deals with anxiety is Mindful-based cognitive therapy (MBCT). This therapy tends to work better for introverts, according to ResearchGate.

The meditation practices used during this therapy can emphasize self-awareness and introspection. A deeper understanding of emotions, which introverts are known to have, can create inner peace as they think of emotions buried behind their feelings of stress, which minimizes that stress caused by anxiety or possible depression.

Introverts would also benefit significantly from Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) as negative thought patterns and behaviors are identified and focused on. Negative thoughts could cause hidden fatigue, leading to stress and anxiety. This is a systematic approach to therapy, which introverts typically enjoy more than extroverts.

Extroverts could benefit more from Interpersonal therapy (IPT), which focuses on communication and relationships and how they are going, which could be affecting stress and depression and how to fix it. Furthermore, group therapy, where everyone talks about their troubles, might work well for them because of the imbedded socialization.

Ambiverts could benefit from all these therapies equally. Just because there are therapies determined to work better for certain personality types doesn't mean that they can't benefit from both, especially because there are more outgoing introverts and more shy extroverts. Or that these rules are true across the board. Each person is different and needs to be assessed by a mental health professional to determine the best approach to therapy.

### **Student's take-to-action and the similarity to therapy methods**

Suzannah Dack, a freshman economics major, said she didn't expect college classes to give so much work each week and that doing homework and balancing hanging out with friends has been stressful and tiring. She reveals she has taken many days off from school to meditate or sleep and journal her thoughts to recenter herself. She mentions how this doesn't work all the time, and venting to friends is something she does almost constantly.

Nick Retter, a junior major in vocal performance, said practicing music for recitals plus doing his theory and music history homework can become overwhelming, especially when he has to go to certain performance art shows.

"I never has time to do anything on personal time and while I enjoy it my life consist around music hanging out with the same people," he said.

Nick is an extrovert and reveals that interacting with people and communicating about anything he's struggling with helps him feel good about himself. Knowing other students experience the same stresses has helped him, and he strives to be there for his peers as well.

These interactions relate to the recommended therapy for extroverts.

### **The hidden truths of human personality**

Adam Leuke, a assistant professor of psychology at Ball State University, said introverts tend to have higher activity in the prefrontal cortex, which leads to more imaginative brains. Leuke said many introverts have a lot of activity in the Default Mode Network (DMN), a part of the brain that helps with introspection, which leads this personality type to be quite self-reflective.

Extroverts, on the other hand, have high dopamine levels, which cause them to be outgoing and pursue challenges or other stimulations. They have a more active limbic and amygdala system, which motivates them to talk and be social with people.

Leuke, who studies human personality, said personality type has a major impact on the way each person moves through the world. Knowing one's personality type may help students better assess which therapy and therapist might be best for them.

Learning what therapy methods work for people of different personality traits is a good way to make people aware of their struggles and help them through their health problems so they can achieve in college and throughout life.

Ball State Counseling Resources:

<https://www.bsu.edu/campuslife/counseling-center/resources/self-help>

<https://www.bsu.edu/campuslife/counseling-center/resources/crisis-and-emergency-services>